MOKUMOKUREN

3

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

CHAPTER 12

I'm so glad I met youuu! ♪

Let's be together for-everrr! ♪

SNIFF! SNIFF!

My one and only priiince! ♪

THE SUMMER
HIKARU DIED

MOKUMOKUREN

3

CHAPTER 12

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バターン
SHUT
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH
...

ZSH

ZSH

THE HAMSTER...

...ISN'T MAKING A FUSS.

...

HMM?

IS THIS REALLY OKAY?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZ
BZZH BZZH BZZ
CHITTER...
AROUND HERE?
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
CAW...
CHITTER...
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZ
SQUEAK!
ガサッ
RUSTLE
AH, WHAT'S THIS...?

VROOM...

TH-
THUMP

WHOA!

THE HELL?

SKRT

YOU OKAY, LITTLE BUDDY?

...OH, JUST A CRACK IN THE ROAD...

Thank youuu. Let me say at least that much. ♪

TAKEDA RESIDENCE
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
CHRP
CHRP
ZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
CHRP
HELLO...
LOTS OF MOSQUITOES AROUND HERE, HUH?

I SEE YOU AIN'T CHANGED NONE. ALWAYS LOOKIN' A MESS...

DA HA HA HA!

"THOSE THINGS" ARE MORE ATTRACTED TO ME WHEN I'M LOOKIN' ROUGH, Y'KNOW?

OH, THIS? IT'S ON PURPOSE.

AHEM!

STARE

HMM...

ENOUGH CHIT-CHAT...

YES, SIR.

PLEASE FILL ME IN ON THE DETAILS.

ALSO, I FOUND SOMETHING NICE UP IN THE MOUNTAINS.

CONVENIENCE

FOR REAL?

HUH?

TAKESHITA-KUN FROM CLASS 4 ASKED TO SEE ME THE OTHER DAY.

YEP!

TAKE-SHITA-KUN...

HE'S THAT POPULAR GUY?

DON'T TELL ME HE...

I WAS ALL LIKE, "WHAT!? NO WAY!"

AH HA HA HA!

FELT LIKE ONE OF THEM UNDERGROUND FIGHTS I SAW IN A MOVIE ONE TIME.

AND I WHOOPED HIS ASS!

HE CHALLENGED ME TO AN ARM-WRESTLIN' MATCH IN FRONT OF ALL THE BOYS IN HIS CLASS!

AH HA HA...

ANYWAY, I BEST GET GOIN'.

GEEZ!

NOW I'M GONNA END UP FAMOUS FOR BEIN' AN ARM-WRESTLIN' CHAMP!

UGH, NO!

YOU OUGHTTA BE A LEGEND!

OH

RIGHT SEE YA TOMOR-ROW!

CLANG

CLANG

CLANG

CLANG

CLANG

CLANG

AGAIN? ...WELL, YER INSTINCTS HAVE NEVER BEEN WRONG.

ALL RIGHT, THEN

YA MIGHT WANNA AVOID THAT CROSSIN' TODAY..

CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
It's coming...
It's coming...
It's coming...
CLANG
CLANG
It's coming...
CLANG

TMP

SPLASH

BRBLE

...!

GONK

SCRATCH

KFF!

YO... SHIKI !!

SPLASH

...AND NOW THAT THING GOT INSIDE YOSHIKI AND IS USIN' HIM AS A SHIELD...!

I-LET MY GUARD DOWN...

CHOMP

YOU BAS-TARD ...

BWOOSH

SNAP

シュル SHURI

DRIP

DRIP

WH...

...AT?

...HUH?

DRIP

SLIP

SPLISH

WH—

...WAS I DOING ...?

WHAT

HAAH

HAAH...

PHEW!

TH...

THANK GOOD-NESS...

CROAK CROAK CROAK

KREEREE

KREEREE

I TOLD YA, DIDN'T I? SOMETHIN' ABOUT YOU DRAWS ATTENTION FROM THOSE THINGS.

WHAT'RE YA SORRY FOR?

SORRY.

NO...THIS IS ON ME FOR LETTIN' IT GO BEFORE...

IT'S A GOOD THING YOU'VE BUILT UP SOME RESISTANCE TO 'EM.

WHAT IF I END UP TRYING TO KILL HIM AGAIN?

I CAN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD.

ALL I CAN REMEMBER IS THE SENSATION OF ME PLUNGIN' HIKARU INTO THE WATER WITH MY HANDS.

I WAS JUS' SAYIN' HOW I WAS GONNA PROTECT YOU, AND THEN ALL THIS HAPPENED. I'M 'BOUT READY TO CRY.

BUT I'M REAL GLAD YOU CAME BACK...

KREEREE

WHY D'YOU CARE ABOUT ME THAT MUCH...?

YOU...

KREEREE

...

WANNA GO CATCH FROGS OR SOMETHIN'?

HAAH...

LET'S CHANGE THE SUBJECT!

...NOT SO SURE MYSELF. I JUST MOVED WITHOUT THINKING...

...HEH.

NAW.

THAT'S TOO COUNTRY FOR ME.

REEE

REEE

AWW...

YOU HATE THE COUNTRY, HUH?

WELL, I LOVE IT. LOTSA STUFF OUT HERE YOU WON'T FIND IN THE CITY.

SMILE

BESIDES, YER ALWAYS HAVIN' FUN NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE.

I KNOW IT AIN'T ALL BAD.

I JUST FEEL LIKE IT AIN'T WHERE I BELONG...

I SURE WILL!

OH, HIKARU-KUN, YOU HAVIN' DINNER WITH US?

...BUT YOUR UNIFORMS SHOULD BE JUST ABOUT DRIED BY NOW.

NOT SURE IF YOU BOYS WERE PLAYING IN THE RIVER OR NOT...

IF THAT MONSTER HAD ATTACKED KAORU OR MOM...

CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CAUTIO

SNAP
KTNK
KTNK
KTNK
THERE'S
MANY OF 'EM...

CHAPTER 12 END

TSUNAMI-GUN...

...I HOPE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT

MY CLOTHES FEEL GROSS..

One day a man went out for a hike.

As he was walking along, lightning suddenly struck him and took his life.

But in that instant...a

Swamp Man was born.

CHAPTER 13

...and continued living the man's life without even realizing that he was now Swamp Man.

LOOKS LIKE I SURVIVED BY SOME MIRACLE.

Afterward, the entity returned home...

"IN THIS CASE, WOULD YOU SAY...

"...SWAMP MAN AND THE MAN WHO DIED ARE THE SAME PERSON?"...

YEP!

I LIKE 'EM. THEY'RE FUN.

PHI-LOS-OPHY, RIGHT?

HUH?

THAT'S ONE OF MASUDA'S WORK-SHEETS, AIN'T IT?

THAT TEACHER SURE DOES LOVE THEM THINGS.

"SWAMP MAN"...

WHAT DO Y'ALL THINK?

HMM...

HARD TO SAY HOW THEY'RE REALLY DIFFERENT.

DON'T MATTER MUCH TO ME, BUUUT...

...THEY'RE CLEARLY DIFFERENT, AIN'T THEY?

WHY'S THAT?

JUST 'COS.

AIN'T THAT THE SAME THING?

I MEAN, HUMANS REGENERATE THEIR CELLS AN' STUFF, SO WE DON'T HAVE THE SAME CELLS WE HAD A FEW YEARS AGO.

SO HE'S A DIFFERENT PERSON, AIN'T HE?

YEAH, YER RIGHT ABOUT THAT...

BUT THE REAL GUY'S DEAD AN' GONE IN THE SWAMP.

THAT'S PRETTY SHARP OF YOU TO SAY, MAKI.

OH.

YEAH, YER RIGHT.

'COS FOR A MOMENT, THEY BOTH EXISTED AT ONCE.

IF THE TWO OF THEM EXISTED, THEY COULD BOTH LEAD SEPARATE LIVES.

BUT FROM THE OUTSIDE THEY'LL ALWAYS LOOK LIKE THE SAME PERSON.

AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE CAN ONLY JUDGE OTHERS BY HOW WE SEE 'EM...

UGH, I DON'T GET IT!

IT DON'T MATTER ANYWAY!

SO WHO EVEN CARES!

YEAH, I HEAR YA.

IT'S A TOUGH ONE

WHAT QUALIFIES A PERSON TO BE THEMSELVES?

THEIR MEMORIES? THEIR CELLS? ...THEIR EXPERIENCES?

...IS THAT THING "HIKARU"?

IF I LOOK AT IT FROM ANOTHER ANGLE...

...WHAT TRULY KILLS A PERSON?

TO THEM, HIKARU'S ALIVE.

HUH!?

YOU BORROWED GYM CLOTHES FROM A GUY!?

OH!

THAT'S RIGHT! I GOTTA RETURN THE GYM CLOTHES I BORROWED FROM HIKARU!

AND ALL THE GIRLS' CLOTHES'RE TOO SMALL!

SHUT UP! I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE SITTIN' OUT WATCHIN' SWIM PRACTICE, AND HIKARU JUST HAPPENED TO BE AROUND.

ゴス
WHOK

'EYYY!

MORN-IN'!

...MRR-NIN'...

MM ..

SNIFF

SNIFF

SNIFF

OHH ...

THANKS ...

AH HA HA!

AH HA!

YOU LOOK SO FUNNY!

WASHED THESE FOR YA! THANKS!

IT SMELLS DANG GOOD.

ALL GIRLIE AN' STUFF.

WHOA!

DO YA NORMALLY SMELL THE THINGS PEOPLE GIVE BACK TO YA?

IT'S ALL FLOWERY.

MAMA'S PARTICULAR WHEN IT COMES TO SCENTS.

GIRLS ALWAYS SMELL REAL GOOD, HUH?

MAYBE IT'S THE FABRIC SOFTENER THEY USE?

HECK IF I KNOW.

WHY DO GUYS STINK SO MUCH?

BEATS ME...

WHRR

...MOUN-
TAIIINS...

SOARING
HIIIGH...

ABOVE
THE

CH[illegible]L-
DREN

UH.
HOW'D IT
GO AFTER
THAT?

OF
THE
DAWN

YER
OUR
HOPE THAT
SHINES
WITH THE
RISIN'
SUN.

THUNK

OH,
RIGHT.

GAH
!!

WHAT? YOU SERIOUS? SHOULD WE WALK OUR BIKES HOME, THEN?

I JUST AIN'T HAVIN' NO LUCK. SERIOUSLY.

AH, DANG IT! WELL, AIN'T THIS SOME SHIT...

DANG!

TCH!

BIKE GOT A FLAT.

VROOOOM

WELL, WELL!

WHAT'S GOIN' ON WITH YOU TWO?

HA HA!

WELL THEN, HOW 'BOUT I GIVE YA A LIFT? CAN YA GET YER BIKES IN THE BACK OF THE TRUCK?

YEAH.

MIKASA-SAN!

SEEMS MY BIKE GOT A FLAT.

SHE WAS REAL HAPPY ABOUT THAT.

OH, AND THANKS FOR FIXIN' KAORU'S YUKATA THE OTHER DAY.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

IF YER SISTER NEEDS ANYTHING ELSE, Y'ALL JUST GIVE A HOLLER.

BEEN A SPELL SINCE KAZUMI GOT TA FIX A GIRL'S YUKATA. I THINK SHE ENJOYED IT.

OHH! GLAD TO HEAR IT!

YES, SIR!

KTNK KTNK

KTNK KTNK

RATTLE

KTNK

KTNK

RATTLE

RATTLE

IT'S SO HOT!

I'LL WALK IT FROM HERE!

THANKS, MIKASA-SAN!

GET THAT THING TO A BIKE SHOP, Y'HEAR?

VROOM DO''

GOING BACK...

...A FEW DAYS EARLIER

ぽちゃん
PLOP

HA HA!

I'M NOT TRYING TO MESS WITH YOU GUYS OR ANY-THING!

IT'S JUST THAT IT'S SAFE HERE.

TREMBLE

NOW. WHY THE HELL DIDJA MAKE US MOVE ...

...TO MI-KASA'S PLACE IN THIS HEAT!?

ズズー
SLRRP

...HOW ARE THINGS IN THE AREA?

SO...

I SEE. THE LADY WITH THE SCARY FACE, HUH...?

HE DOIN' ALL RIGHT?

AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR FATHER, TAKEDA-SAN?

WELL, THEY AIN'T GOIN' GREAT. OLD LADY MATSUURA DIED IN AN UNNATURAL WAY.

AN' HE'S BEEN HOLED UP IN HIS ROOM EVER SINCE.

...HE KEEPS SAYIN', "I'M NEXT."

HER DEATH WAS A STRANGE ONE, DESPITE HER NEVER SETTIN' FOOT IN THE MOUNTAINS.

...NOW, YOU LISTEN HERE!

BAM

DA HA HA!

I KNEW IT!

SOME-ONE DIED HERE!

AND IT MIGHT WELL BE 'COS YOU AN' THAT DANG COMPANY OF YOURS KEEP INTER-FERIN' IN OUR AFFAIRS!

WELL, I'D THINK HAVING A LARGE CORPORATION PUSH FORWARD WITH DEVELOPMENT DESPITE HAVING NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE AREA WOULD BE MORE CON-CERNING...

SOME-THING ABOUT COMPACT CITY PLANN'ING, WAS IT?

I WISH YOU'D SHOW A LITTLE GRATITUDE TO MY "COMPANY" FOR PUTTING A STOP TO ALL THAT.

T-TAP

I'M JUST CONDUCTING A LITTLE RESEARCH IN EXCHANGE...

"COMPANY," HUH?

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THAT'S ALL ABOUT...

YOU KNOW HOW THE INDOUS' SON WENT MISSIN', DON'CHA?

WELL, I RECKON THEIR RITUAL FAILED.

AND THAT'S WHY SOMETHIN' STRANGE HAPPENED WITH...THAT THING...

...HA HA!

OH, SPEAKING OF, I WENT TO THAT MOUNTAIN...

...AND FOUND THIS ON THE GROUND.

THAT'S... THE BAG KOUHEI USED TO USE.

SO HIS SON TOOK IT WITH HIM?

OPEN IT AND SEE WHAT'S INSIDE.

PLUNK

WHAT THE—!?

ZZZIP

THE HECK ...

...IS THIS?

BLACK...

...STONE?

THIS...

...PROBABLY USED TO BE A HUMAN HEAD...

...I THINK.

EUGH!

!?

WHAT'S A THING LIKE THAT DOIN' IN THERE...!?

HUH? IT IS ...?

BEATS ME!

BUT IT HAS POWERFUL PROTECTIVE POWERS.

HA HA!

HAVING THIS ON HAND PREVENTS MOST OF THE NASTY ONES FROM GETTING NEAR YOU.

WAIT.

...THE IMPURITIES AIN'T THERE NO MORE?

AT FIRST I THOUGHT THIS LITTLE GUY WAS THE REASON THE MOUNTAIN'S BEEN CLEARED OF ITS IMPURITIES...

THE IMPURITIES THAT USED TO PERMEATE THE ENTIRE MOUNTAIN ARE NO LONGER THERE.

NOW YOU CAN ENTER THE AREA JUST FINE.

BUT IT'D BE A BIT OF A STRETCH TO SAY IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF THIS THING...

...WHAT'RE YOU SAYIN'...?

WHEN I WENT TO CHECK ON IT TODAY, THAT BARRIER WAS PRETTY BANGED UP.

THAT'S NOT A GOOD SIGN, Y'KNOW, SEEING AS IT WAS QUITE THE SPECIAL BARRIER.

ALSO, I WENT AND SET UP A BARRIER OF SORTS AT THE SHRINE HERE ON THE MIKASAS' PROPERTY.

I WANTED TO CREATE A "SAFE SPACE."

SOME-THING'S COME DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN.

.....

...WHAT ....!?

.....

MY GUESS IS IT'S HIDING OUT SOMEWHERE IN SOME OTHER FORM.

.....

IT'S JUST AS KOUHEI SAID..

AHH...IT FINALLY HAPPENED.

IT DOESN'T FEEL REAL.

WHAT

SHOULD WE DO ?

SVRRRP

SKRSH

WELL ...

...HOW ABOUT WE SMOKE IT OUT?

CHAPTER 13 END

HELLOOO!

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CHAPTER 14

I HAVE MY EYE ON YA, SO DON'T GO TRYIN' ANYTHIN' FUNNY, Y'HEAR?

...YOU CAN MAKE SOME KINDA BARRIER OR SOMETHIN', RIGHT?

CAN'T YA SET IT UP OVER THE WHOLE VILLAGE?

I HAD TO GIVE UP ONE OF MY ORGANS FOR THAT, SO I CAN'T MAKE TOO MANY.

GRP!- I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING REMOTELY LIKE A SIXTH SENSE.

IT'S MUCH [illegible] THAN WHAT THE COMPANY [illegible]

AH... YEAH. IT WAS "TAKEN" ON A JOB.

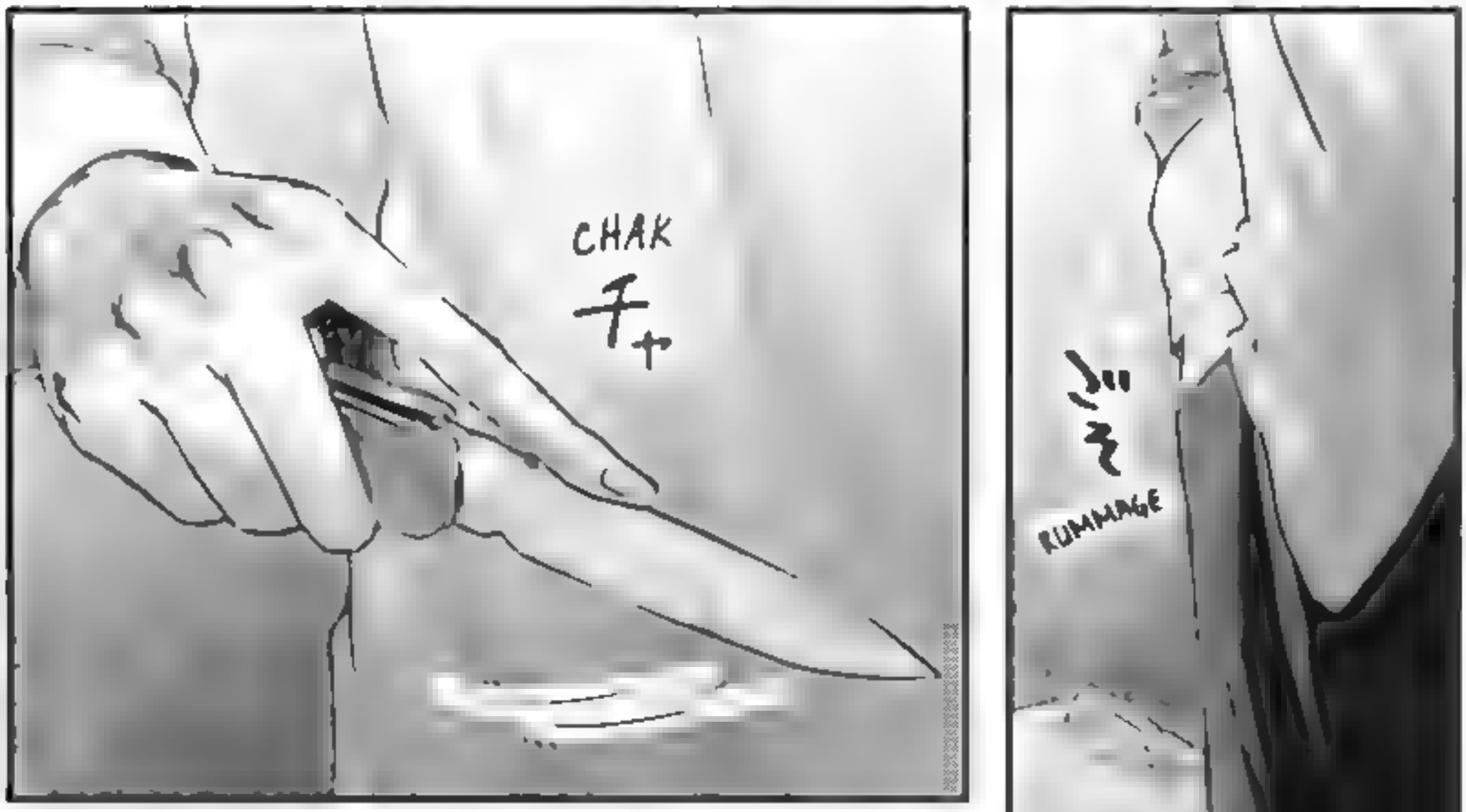
IT GROWS SOME-TIMES... ...BUT IT'S NOT AN ISSUE.

WHACK

HYAH!

HYAH!

HEY!
YOU PUNK!
THE HELL'RE YA DOIN' !?
HUH !?
SEEMS LIKE IT'S STILL BELOW.


CHAK
RUMMAGE

SLIT

STOP MOVING!!

!!

JINGLE

SQUEEZE

TOSS

THIS ONE'S MY HUNTING DOG.

THE THING CAUSING YOU TROUBLE HERE... Y'KNOW, WHAT YOU GUYS ARE CALLING "NOUNUKI-SAMA"...

IT'LL GO AFTER IT.

IMPURITIES LIKE THIS SHOULD BE DRAWN TO SOMETHING LIKE YOUR "NOUNUKI-SAMA"...

I JUST CAN'T SEE HIM BEIN'

I'M GONNA START!
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH
HEEEY!
ALL RIIIGHT!
OH! TSUJI-NAKA-KUN?

NO ONE REALLY SHOWS UP FOR PHOTO CLUB...

I JUST HAPPENED TO GET ASKED TO DO THIS.

TEZUKA-SENSEI.

I THOUGHT YA'D BE IN STUDY HALL TODAY. IT'S RARE TO SEE YA DOIN' CLUB ACTIVITIES.

TH... THANK YOU.

Y'KNOW, THAT ONE OF THE CHURCH FROM OVER YONDER.

THAT SO?

YER PHOTO FROM LAST YEAR'S CULTURAL FESTIVAL WAS GREAT.

OHH, ABOUT THAT

ISN'T THAT KIND OF RARE FOR A COUNTRY TOWN LIKE THIS?

SPEAKING OF, THERE ARE PLENTY OF CHURCHES IN THIS TOWN.

OH THAT EXPLAINS WHY KAMEYAMA-SAN'S FAMILY IS CHRISTIAN.

BZZZZZZZZZZZZ

HUH

THERE'S AT LEAST ONE OF THOSE OLD CHURCHES THAT'S STILL ACTIVE.

CHRISTIANS WHO WERE PERSECUTED DURING THE EDO PERIOD FLED TO THIS AREA

BUT IT'S TRUE THAT THIS PLACE HAS A HISTORY WITH RELIGION.

NOT SURE WHY

I HEARD IT HAS SOMETHIN' TO DO WITH THE DOMAIN HAVIN' A HARD TIME INTERFERING WITH THINGS HERE

MAYBE THAT'S WHY?

HUM?

BUT WHY WEREN'T THEY PERSECUTED HERE?

THE DOMAIN HAD A HARD TIME INTERFERING WITH THINGS HERE...?

SUPERSIZE!!
ULTRA☆SPARK
DEMON KING
SUPER-SWEET FUN PACK
SMOK
LOONG
LONG-LASTING
LIKE LIGHTNING
ENOUGH WITH THE SHINING!
I'M DOIN' THIS ONE.
SHIFTS OVER TIME
RED BLUE
SUPER-SWEET FUN PACK!
ULTRA ☆ SPARK DEMON KING!

MUSTA BEEN A HASSLE FOR Y'ALL TO COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE FOR A SLEEPOVER.

IT'S THE WEEKEND, AND MY FOLKS DROVE ME HERE, SO IT'S ALL GOOD!

SURE IS.

YER PLACE IS HUGE, HIKARU!

YA THINK SO?

DING...

DING-LING...

HOW 'BOUT *NASHI-TETSU*?

HEY, YOSHIKI, GRAB A GAME FROM MY ROOM.

YEAH!

YOU CAN USE MY MAMA'S.

OH, HIKARU, YA GOT A HAIR DRYER?

スーッ
SSST

THMP

CREAK
CREAK

NOTHIN'S CHANGED.

I'VE SEEN IT SOMEWHERE BEFORE...

THIS HAT...

MATSUSHIMA SAW MILL

BOOM
BA BOOM
YANK

...THIS FESTIVAL WAS ORIGINALLY HELD FOR THE GOD OF THAT MOUNTAIN.

HEEEY!

DON'T GET YERSELF SNATCHED UP.

OH!

AN' I WON'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER.

ME AN' THE BOYS'RE DRINKIN' OVER THAT WAY. COME JOIN US.

HEY, YOSHIKI! IS THE CORN GOOD?

SO THAT'S WHERE YA BEEN, TOSHI!

BUT I CLEARLY REMEMBER THAT TIME.

I

BUT I... DON'T WANT TO BECOME THAT KIND OF ADULT.

FLAP

POKEMEN

SUPER SMASH HO

SHF

KRIK

KRIK

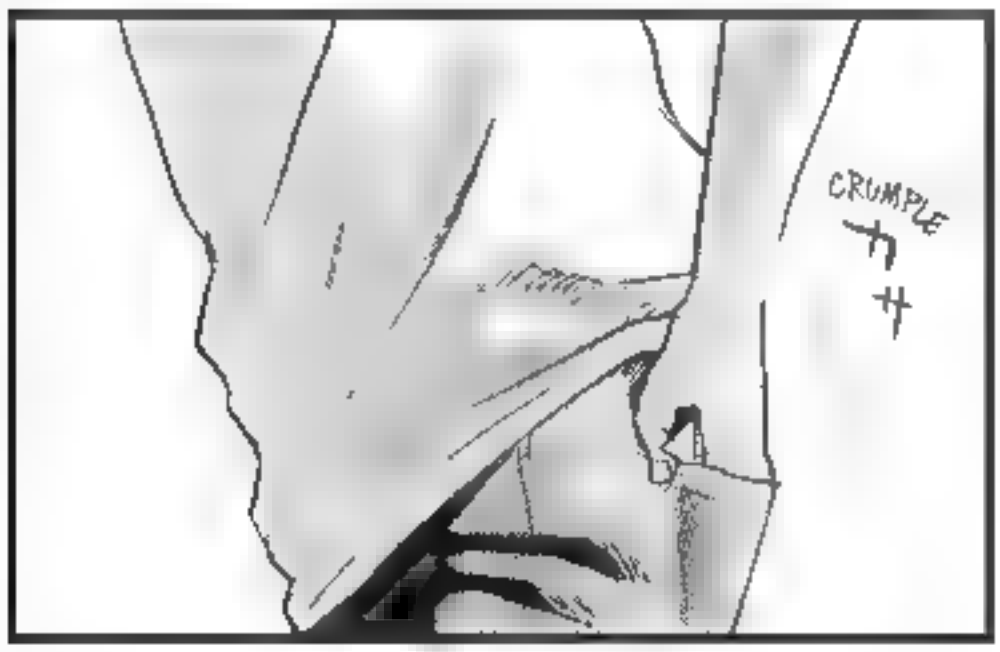
SOMETHING SPILLED ON IT AND GOT IT ALL CRUSTY...

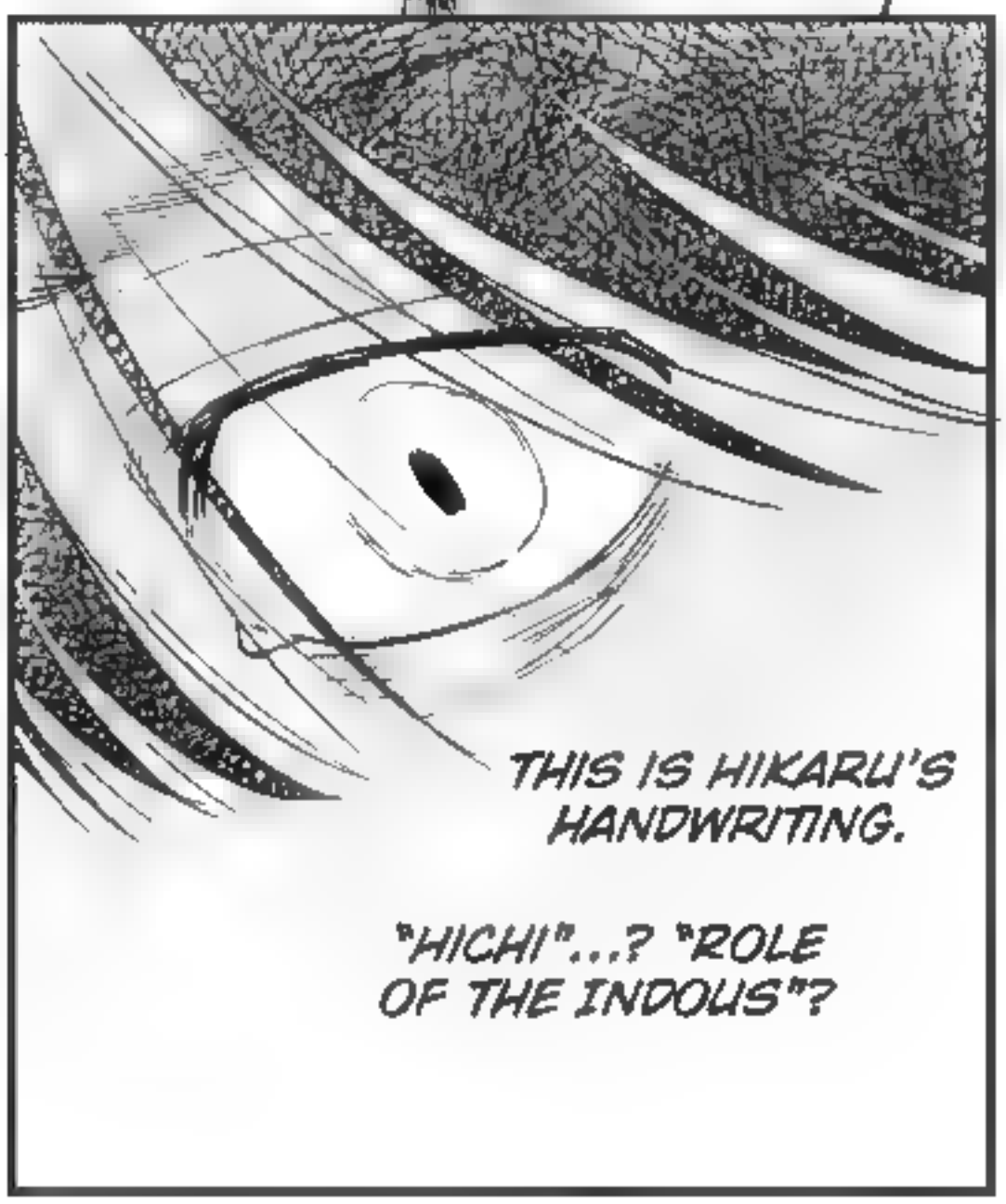
WONDER IF IT'S ALL RIGHT TO THROW OUT.

WHAT'S... THIS THING?

RIP

Method for Inuki-sama to Hichi then the Daddy nd duty of the Indous.





THIS IS HIKARU'S HANDWRITING.

"HICHI"...? "ROLE OF THE INDOUS"?

WHOOOOOA!

Infinity!!

HOW'S HE SO GOOD AT PRO-NOUNCING THAT?

COOOOLI

"HYPE" HA-HA!

HE'S GETTIN' ALL HYPE ABOUT THIS.

THAT'S WILD!

FIREWORKS ARE AMAZIN'...! SO COOOOL!

HERE!

I THINK IT'S OUT.
I'LL GO GET ANOTHER FROM YAMAHISA.

CLICK
カチッ
AH!
CLICK
カチッ
THE LIGHTER'S NOT LIGHTIN'!
カチッ

I'LL COME WITH!

OH...

SURE, LET'S GO.

UHH, I STILL DUNNO!

HMM ...

I HEARD THE SAME. YOU GOIN', MAKI?

BY THE WAY, I HEARD THERE'S GONNA BE A HUGE FIREWORKS EVENT AT THE END OF THE SUMMER.

GUESS NOW'S A GOOD TIME TO CLEAN UP A BIT.

YEAH.

YEAH.

...I'LL GO CATCH UP WITH HIKARU AND ASAKO RIGHT QUICK AN' TELL THEM TO GRAB SOME ICE POPS.

...IT SURE IS HOT, AIN'T IT!?

BUT...

CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
HEY
IS THAT THE MOUNTAIN WHERE YOU WENT MISSIN'?
YEP
SURE IS.
DON'T 'MEMBER MUCH ABOUT IT, THOUGH

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK

I SEE

KINDA FEELS LIKE EVERY-THING'S GONE BACK TO NORMAL

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK

BUT IT FELT LIKE A FUNERAL BACK THEN.

FOR REAL

I'M GLAD YOU MADE IT BACK...

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK

BUT, LIKE .

AN' FEEL FREE TO IGNORE ME IF THIS DON'T MAKE NO SENSE, BUT...

...JUST...

...WHO ARE YOU?

CHAPTER 16 END

CHAPTER 15

GRANNY, THERE'S A WEIRD NOISE COMIN' FROM OVER THERE.

SPINME

SPINME

YEAH.

CAN'T SEE NOTHIN', BUT I SURE CAN HEAR IT.

DO YA HEAR SOMETHIN', ASAKO?

THAT'S 'COS YER A HEARER.

YA BEST NOT ANSWER OR MESS WITH THEM THINGS...

...BECAUSE YER VOICE WILL END UP REACHIN' 'EM ON THE OTHER SIDE...

'COS IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY.

CAN YOU HEAR 'EM TOO, GRANNY?

MY BIG SISTER AND MY DADDY COULD SEE AND HEAR 'EM A LITTLE TOO.

I CAN'T HEAR 'EM, BUT I CAN SEE 'EM A LITTLE.

YOU COULD SAY THAT.

Y'SEE, THE WORLD OF THE DEAD OVERLAPS WITH OURS, SO THEY'RE RIGHT BESIDE US.

ARE THEY GHOSTS?

AN' EVERY NOW AN' THEN, PEOPLE AN' THINGS FROM THE OTHER SIDE END UP OVER HERE DUE TO LITTLE DISTORTIONS.

THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD AND PEOPLE'S LINGERIN' EMOTIONS POOL AND MIX TOGETHER IN THAT OTHER WORLD...

...BEFORE BEIN' REBORN BACK IN THIS WORLD.

WELL, SOME OF 'EM ARE SCARY, AN' SOME AIN'T.

EHH...? SOUNDS SCARY...

...OF LIFE AND DEATH.

SWIRL

SWIRL

IT'S WHAT WE CALL THE NEVER-ENDING CYCLE...

BUT THEM THINGS ARE TERRIFYIN', SO YA BEST NOT GET INVOLVED WITH 'EM...

WHAT I'M SAYIN' IS, SOME ON THE OTHER SIDE AIN'T ALWAYS BAD, AN' SOME HERE AIN'T ALWAYS GOOD EITHER.

HEH HEH.

I DON' REALLY GET IT.

I'M...

...LOOKIN' FORWARD TO MIDDLE SCHOOL.

I'LL FINALLY GET TO SEE YA EVERY DAY!

EE HEE HEE!

AND MY MAMA SAID SHE'S THINKIN' OF JOININ' THE PTA WITH YER MAMA.

HEE!

EE HEE!

YEAH!

SURE IS GREAT THAT OUR FOLKS GET ALONG.

YEAH.

BUT WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS SINCE FOREVER.

SO THIS'LL BE REAL FUN

WISH WE'D GONE TO THE SAME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TOO, THOUGH.

KSHAK
WHICH CLUB YA GONNA JOIN?
KSHAK
KSHAK
KSHAK
KSHAK
KSHAK
KSHAK
KSHAK
KSHAK
KSHAK

I'LL JUST IGNORE IT...LIKE I ALWAYS DO...
KSHAK KSHAK KSHAK
OH, MAMA!
FINALLY DONE SHOPPIN'?
たっ
TMP
KSHAK KSHAK KSHAK
FWIP

IT'S ...

...GOIN' AFTER YUU-CHAN!?

KSHAK

!?

WHAT !?

IT SUD-DENLY SPED UP ...!!

NO, DON'T!

KSHAK.

.....

WATCH OUT.

YUU-CHAN!

.....

"WATCH OUT"...?

VWOOM

WHAT . ?

THAT WAS CLOSE! MUSTA BEEN GOIN' OVER A HUN-DRED..

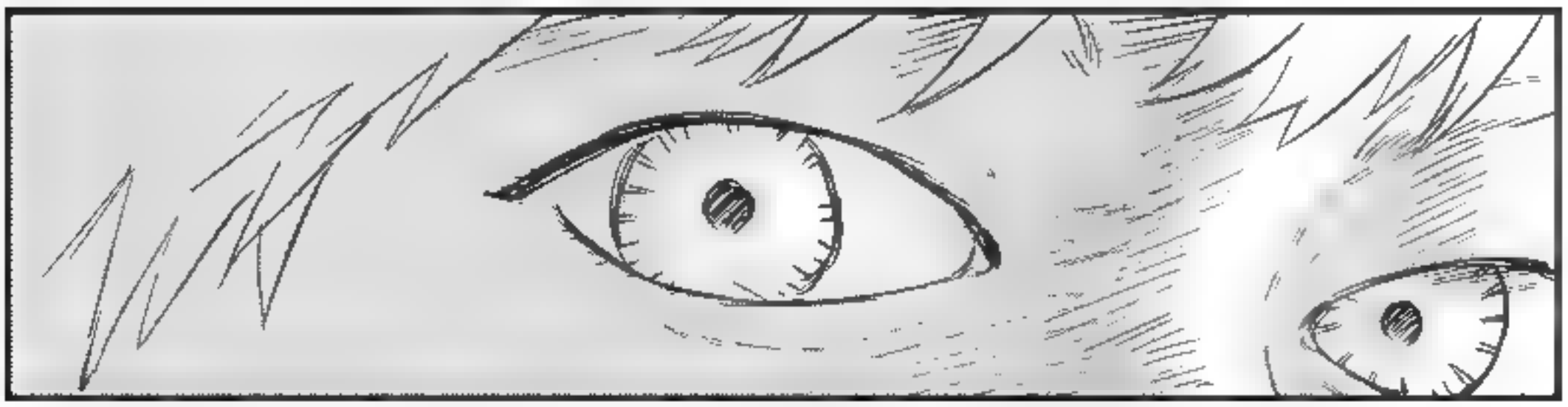
FOLKS FROM THE OTHER WORLD MIGHT BE SCARY...

...BUT I DON'T THINK THEY'RE ALL BAD.

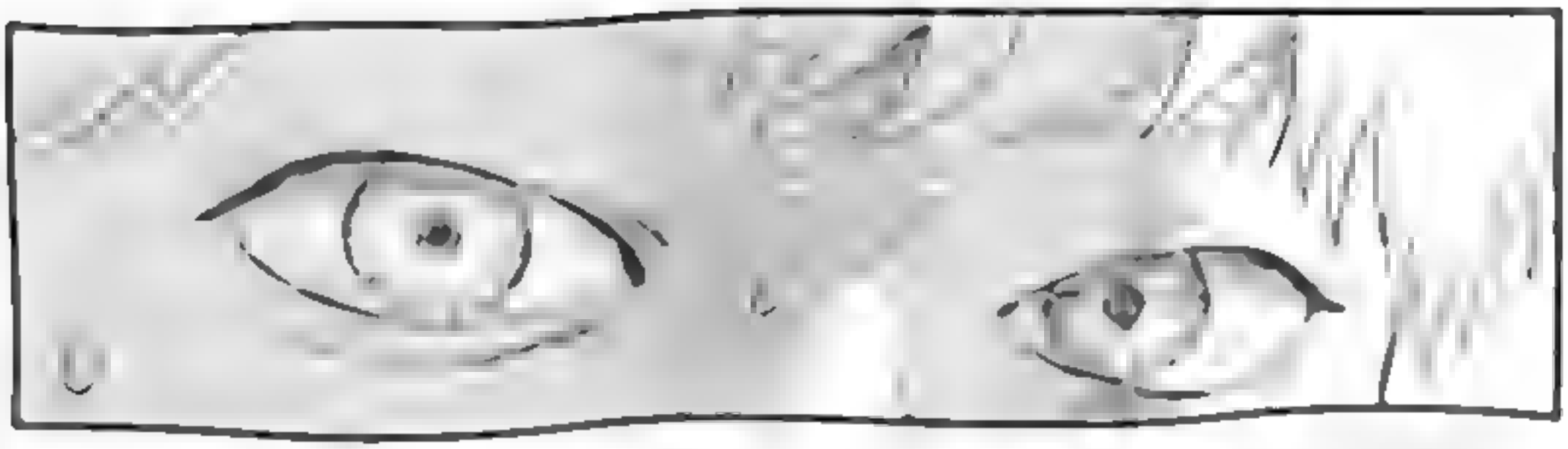
SO...IT SHOULDN'T BE WEIRD TO TALK WITH 'EM.

...JUST...

...WHO ARE YOU?



HOW? DOES SHE KNOW?
V? DOES SHE
ES SHE KNOW? D
SHE KNOW?



HEY...

CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK
CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CROAK CRO
JOLT

THUD

ASA-KO!

HEY!!!

FSH

HAAAAH.

GULP

WHAT ...

...DID YOU DO...?

JUST

JUST WHAT ?

SO I JUST

I WAS ABOUT TO BE FOUND OUT

HA HA!

COME TA THINK OF IT I CAN'T DO THAT. CAN I?

ESPECIALLY TO ASAKO

WHA ..?

HUH?

UH

WHAT'RE YOU ?

HUH?

IT'D BE "SAD" IF SHE DIED, RIGHT?

HOW COULD YOU. ?

HUH?

THAT'S IT'S SOME-ONE'S LIFE.

HUH?

D

K

DID YOU TRY TO..

...KILL HER?

BEIN' DEAD, BEIN' ALIVE
IS THERE REALLY THAT BIG A DIFFER-ENCE?
IS BEIN' ALIVE REALLY MORE IMPOR-TANT?
I AIN'T SURE THOUGH...

IT'S JUST CHANGIN' FORMS, Y'KNOW?

THE WAY I SEE IT, THERE AIN'T MUCH DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEIN' DEAD OR ALIVE.

DEATH AIN'T THAT SCARY.

HUH ...?

SO THEN...

...WHEN YA SAID YA DON'T WANNA KILL ME, WAS THAT...

...A LIE...?

IF YOU DIE...

...I WON'T BE ABLE TO EAT ICE CREAM WITH YOU NO MORE...

HUH ...?

NAW, THAT'S DIFFER-ENT...

YER... YER...

...SPECIAL.

HUH?

THAT'S IT...?

THAT'S WHY...?

AIN'T IT THE SAME FOR ASAKO...!?

YER CONTRA-DICTIN' YERSELF ...!

HOW CAN YOU SAY I'M SPECIAL WHEN YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT A LIFE IS...!!?

DIDJA KILL HER?
THAT OLD LADY WHO DIED NEAR HERE... MATSUURA-SAN...WAS THAT YOU, THEN?

YEAH

HRK!

GAHK...

BLRH...

EEUGH...

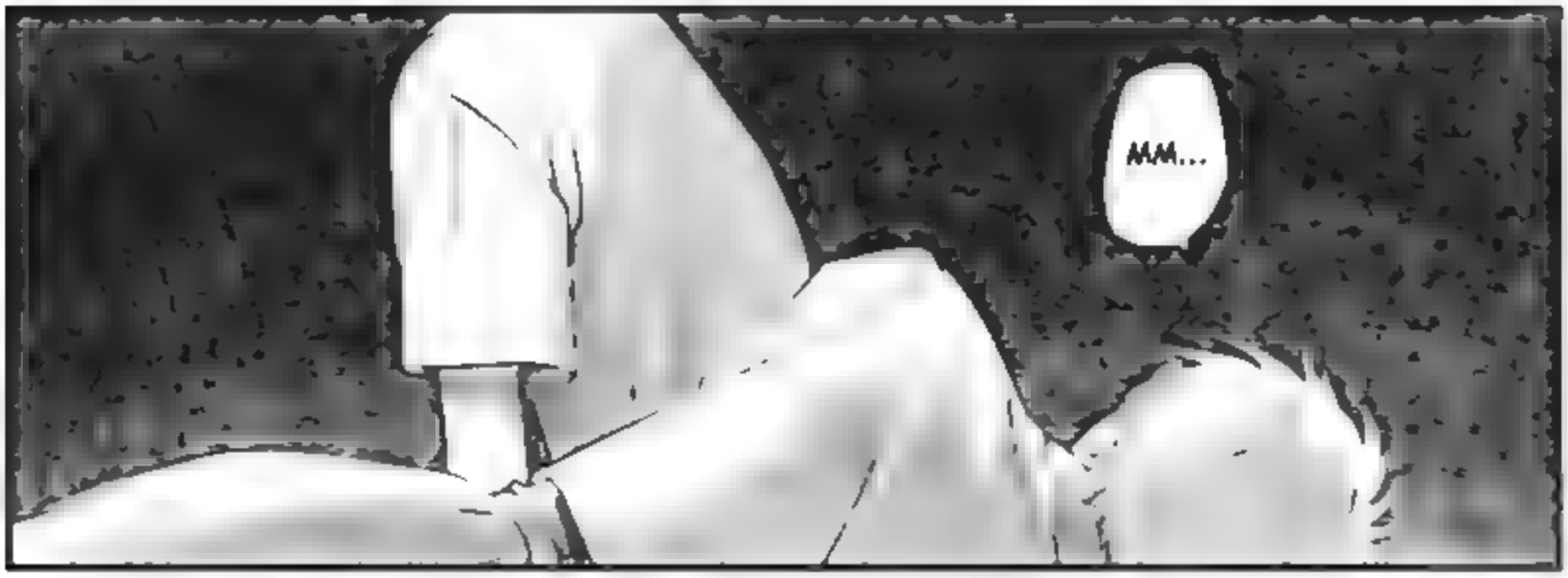
SPATTER

SPLAT

SPLAT

WHOA!

YA PUKED!



CHAPTER 15 END

AH-

LOOKS LIKE I...

...PASSED OUT ALL OF A SUDDEN...

AH...!

ASAKO ...

HI-KARU!

YOU ALL RIGHT!?

HUH?

CHAPTER 16

OH LAAA...

'C...

'COS...

...YER POS-SESSED BY A GHOST...

UUU...

IT'S CREEPY, AIN'T IT?

AN' ALWAYS COULD?

SO YOU CAN HEAR THE VOICES OF SPIRITS... AND STUFF...?

...HIS VOICE WOULD SOUND WEIRD SOMETIMES.
BETTER STUFF LATELY
...IT SORTA SEEMS LIKE THAT DANGEROUS THING IS PROTECTIN' YOU?
SOMETIMES EVEN FELT LIKE IT COULD BE SAFER FOR YOU TO BE WITH HIM.
...I FIGURED HE'D BEEN POSSESSED BY SOMETHIN'

AM I IN THE CLEAR?

SO...I THOUGHT MAYBE...
...IT WOULD UNDER-STAND ME IF I SPOKE WITH IT.
AND I TRIED TO START A CONVERSA-TION WITH THE THING INSIDE HIKARU...

NO...
I BELIEVE YOU.
FORGET WHAT I SAID...
I'M SORRY ...
I MUST SOUND CRAZY FOR TELLIN' Y'ALL THIS.
UNNNGH!

...
THANK YOU.

I'M WORRIED YA MIGHT FAINT AGAIN, SO YOU SHOULD HEAD BACK.

OKAY

YO-SHIKI..

BUMP

WELCOME BACK.

HUH?

WHERE'S YOSHIKI?

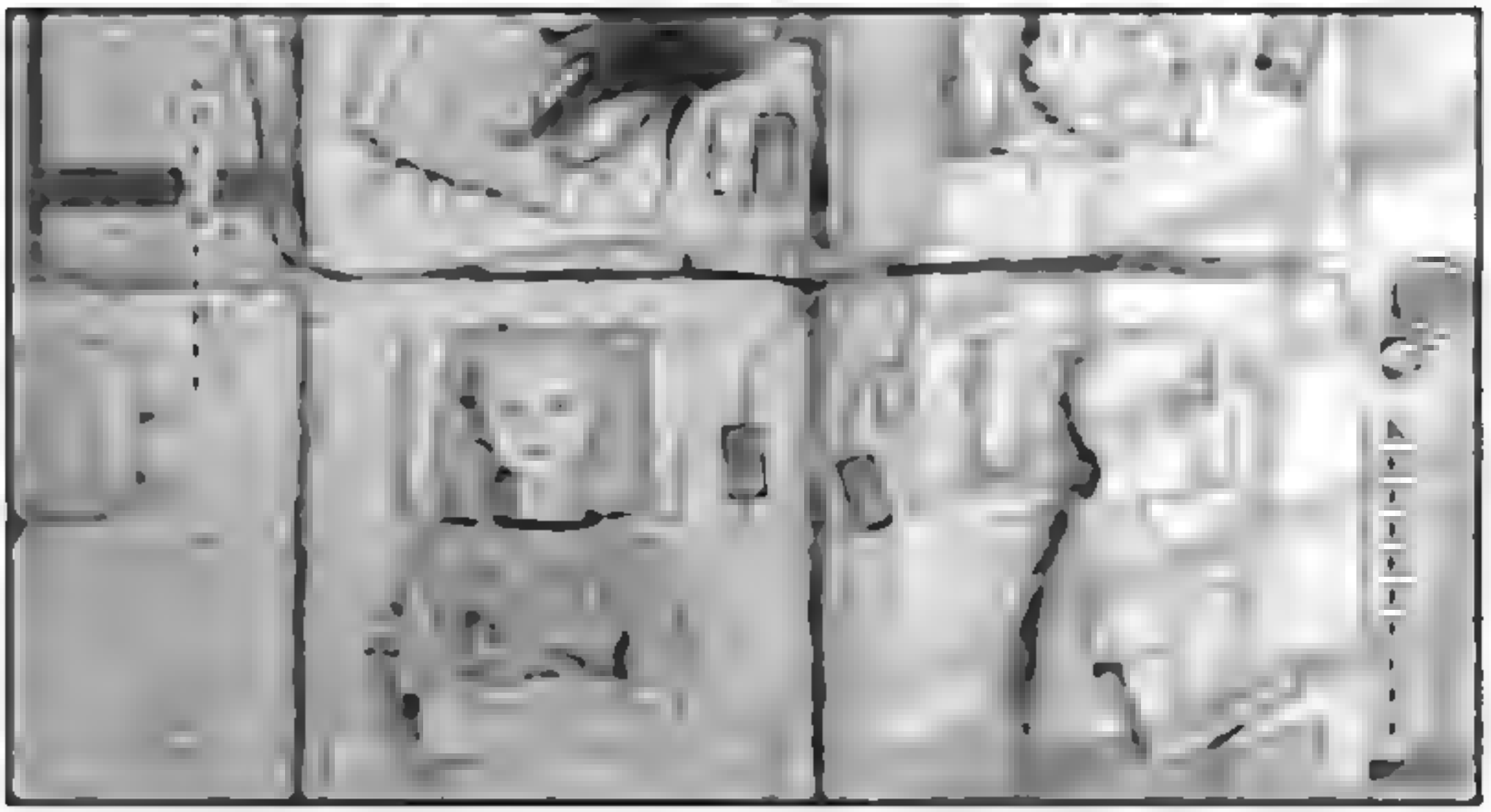
WHAT!!? WHY!?

WAS IT HIS STOM-ACH!?

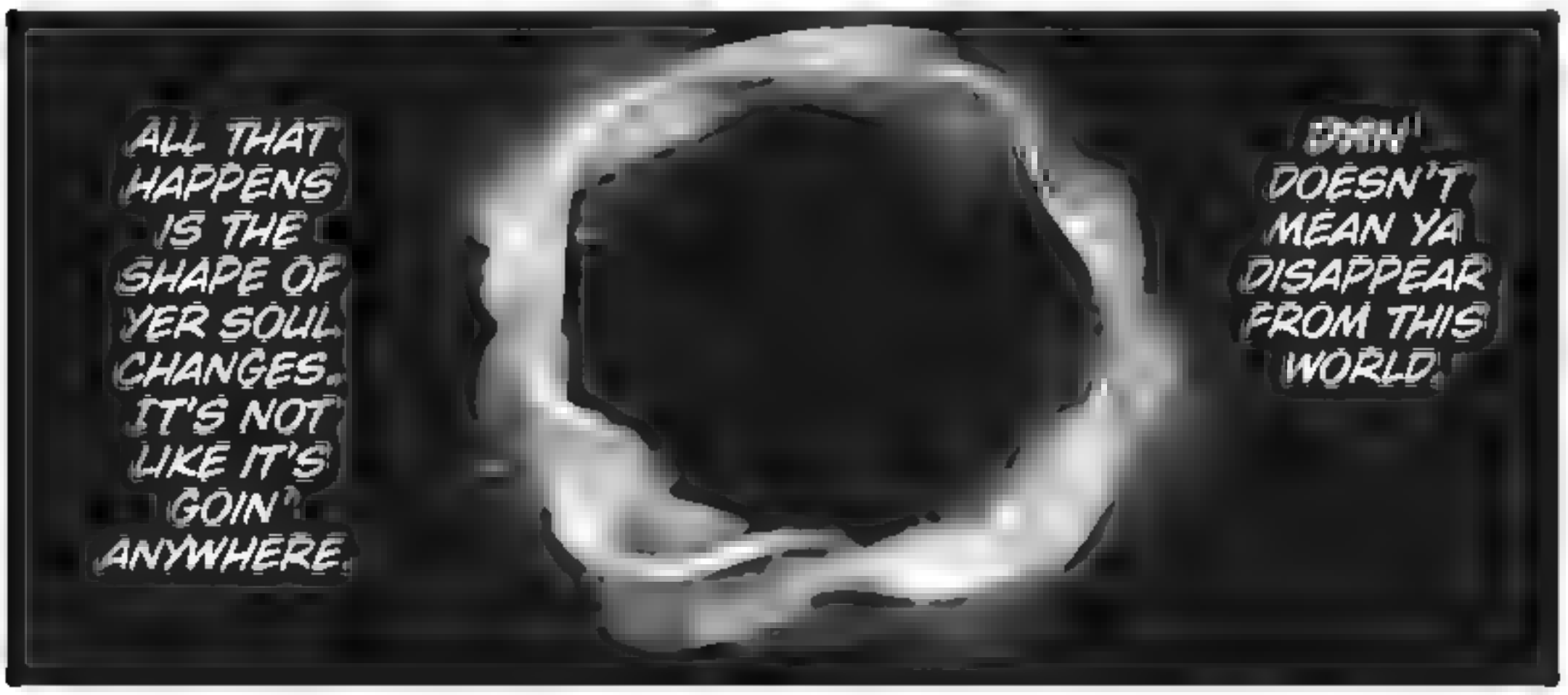
HE WASN'T LOOKIN' TOO GOOD...

...WENT HOME...

OH... WELL, HE, UH...



WHAT
IS
LIFE?


ALL THAT HAPPENS IS THE SHAPE OF YER SOUL CHANGES. IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S GOIN' ANYWHERE.
DAN DOESN'T MEAN YA DISAPPEAR FROM THIS WORLD.

IT'S ALWAYS BY YER SIDE.

YER BORN AND YA DIE, BUT YER SOUL DON'T REALLY GO AWAY.

YOSHIKI'S SOUL...

...IS SO PRETTY...!!

BUT I DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKE

AM I THINKING RIGHT OR IS "MIKEY" OUT

...AND I CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT...!

MY MIND'S A TOTAL MESS...

BZZ ZH BZZH

MAKI'S DADDY IS GIVIN' US ALL A LIFT HOME.

HURRY UP, Y'ALL.

SHUT

BZZH BZZH

OH!

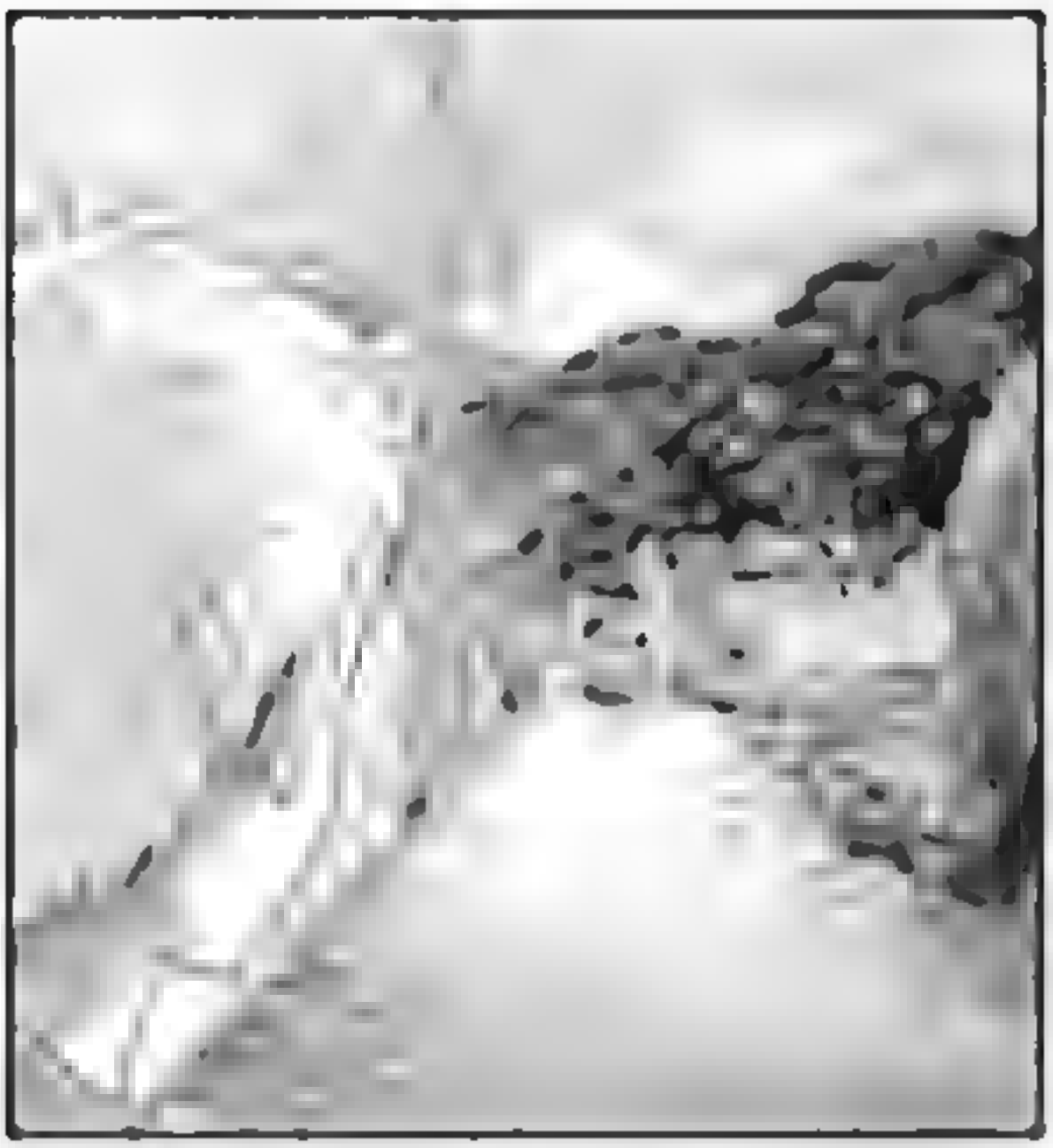
...TELL YOSHIKI I HOPE HE FEELS BETTER...

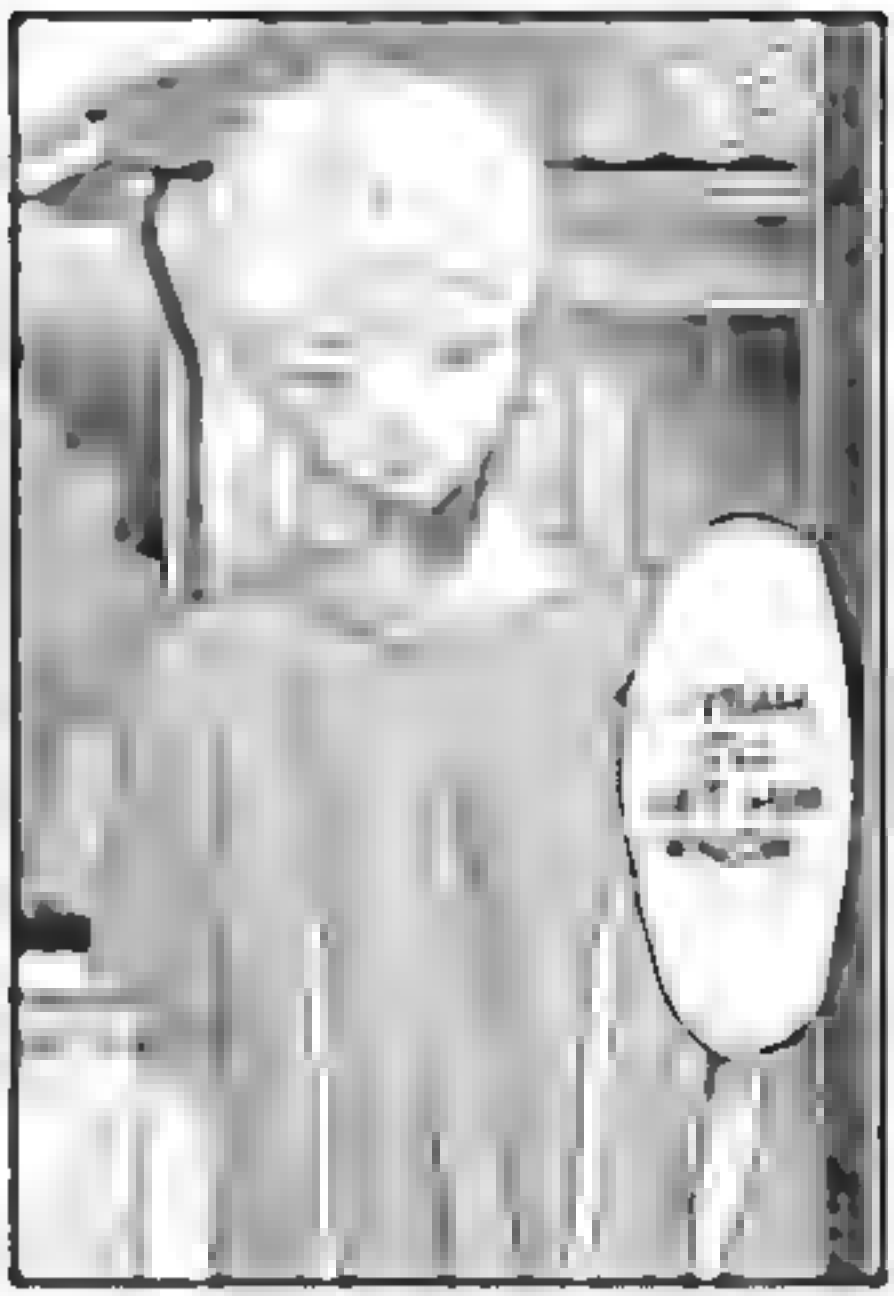
BZZH BZZH

ALL RIGHT

SEE YA AT SCHOOL TOMOR-ROW.

BZZH





RATTLE RATTLE RATTLE

LET'S GET TA SCHOOL, HIKARU.

CHIRP!

CHIRP!

CHIRP...

HEY...

WHRRR

HUH ...?

WHY? AIN'T HE MAD ABOUT THE OTHER DAY?

TODAY ...

...YOU WANNA SKIP SCHOOL?

HUH?

SIGH

...NO, I AM.
I'M JUST WONDERIN' IF YER MAD AT ME FOR THE OTHER DAY...

Y' AIN'T HAVIN' FUN?

NAW, NOT REALLY... I AIN'T MAD.
YA WANTED TO WATCH THIS MOVIE, RIGHT?
SO WATCH IT.

YEAH.

GOIN' TO THE CONVENIENCE STORE?

CINEMA KIBOGAYAMA

NEM

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

HM?

TOSS

CRUNCHY-KUN SODA

IT'S SCARY!

WHAT...? WHY'S HE BEIN' SO NICE..!?

HUH? THANKS ...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

THEY WERE ALWAYS MOVIN'.

AH, YEAH... IT'S LIKE THEY PUT A WEIRD AMOUNT OF EFFORT INTA DRAWIN' THOSE EYEBROWS...

SO, IN THE MOVIE, DIDN'T THE MAIN GUY'S EYEBROWS BOTHER YOU?

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

IS IT ALL RIGHT TO SKIP LIKE THIS?

HEY.

HA HA!

WHAT KIND OF MOVIE WAS THAT?

IT RELIED TOO MUCH ON EYE-BROWS.

THE ANIMATOR MIGHTA DIED EXHAUSTIN' ALL THEIR ENERGY ON THEM EYEBROWS.

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZ

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

HUH?

OH!

AHH!

...SO COACH HARA WON'T GET MAD.

OUR ATTENDANCE IS USUALLY PRETTY GOOD...

OH, AND YOUR ICE POP'S MELTIN'.

YEAH ...

BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH BZZH

SPLAT

HEH.

YER ICE POP DIED.

AW!

IN THE END, WE SKIPPED SCHOOL JUST TO COME BACK TO YOUR PLACE...

IT'S FINE, AIN'T IT?

KAORU WENT TO WORK WITH MY MOM ANYWAY

HEY...

TICK

TOCK

TICK

TOCK

TICK

TOCK

GRANDPRIX COMICS

MAST

GPC MASTER + M

...I WONDER WHY RON AND TSUMO GET ALONG SO WELL.

SO IN *MASTER + MASTER*...

HEY...

WHY, HUH...?

ELEVEN VOLUMES. AND—

SHUNK

HUH ...?

HAH!

HAH!

HFF!

HAFF!

!

FF!

HFF!

YO-
SHIKI
...?

I KNEW
IT

YOU
WON'T
DIE

SORRY.

I'M SORRY .....

I THOUGHT

THAT I HAD TO

...TEACH YOU..

.....

I WANTED TA AT LEAST.

MAKE SURE YA HAD FUN IN YER FINAL MOMENT ..

SO!

..SO TODAY ...

...YOU PLANNED TO DO THIS...

...FROM THE VERY START ...?

IF YOU WON'T DIE .

HA!

BA-DUM

BA-DUM

BA-DUM

..THEN KILL ME...

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

OOH, I HAVE TO THINK OF SOMETHING. I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING! WHAT DO I DO? WHAT DO I DO? I DON'T WANNA DIE!

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

HE DON'T KNOW WHAT SHOULD I DO?

HA!

...!

I JUST DON'T VALUE LIFE MUCH... THAT'S FOR SURE.

THIS AIN'T THE TIME TO BE CRYIN'.

I BET... THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

CLENCH

NGH ...

SHOVE

WAIT A SEC.

...!

WHAT'RE YOU DOIN'?

RIP

RIP

RIP

HAAAH.

HAAAH.

DRAG...

DRAG...

YO-SHIKI

TAKE THIS.

IT'S HALF OF MY INSIDES.

I JUST RIPPED IT OUT.

I STILL DON'T REALLY GET HOW IMPORTANT LIFE CAN BE.

BUT WITH THIS...

...I'VE BECOME SMALL ENOUGH THAT I CAN'T EASILY KILL NO ONE.

YOU...

WHY'RE YA DOIN' ALL THIS FOR ME...?

IT WAS LIKE I'D LOST MY PUR-POSE

I JUST HAD THIS VAGUE SENSE THAT I DIDN'T BELONG

I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT I AM

BEFORE I BECAME LIKE THIS, I DON'T EVEN

EMOTIONS.

BUT

...I THOUGHT I'D JUST KILL YA IF YA FOUND ME OUT.

...AT FIRST...

AND IN THE END, YOU ACCEPTED ME, DIDN'CHA?

THAT'S WHAT I'D BEEN MISSING ALL ALONG.

AND I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE ALL RIGHT TO STAY HERE.

THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I FELT LIKE I WAS NEEDED.

FOR WHATEVER REASON...

...YOU BECAME THE PLACE WHERE I BELONG.

AND FOR ME...

...THAT'S INCREDI-BLY...

...IM-POR-TANT...

I'M FINE WITH THAT.

FOR ME... THAT'S JUST FINE.

LIKE A DUCKLING WHO IMPRINTED ON ITS MAMA...

THAT'S ALL IT IS...

THE WORLD HE SEES IS... JUST SO DIFFERENT...

MAKES SENSE THAT HE WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT A LIFE IS.

STILL, I...

I REALLY AM

SUCH A

...FOOL, HUH...?

I'LL BE WITH YOU NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO.

EVEN IF SOMETHING IN ME BREAKS...

IF YOU REALLY WANNA STAY HERE...

.....

BUT... Y'KNOW ...

...IT MIGHT BE THAT YOU DON'T BELONG HERE.

...THEN LET'S DO SOME RESEARCH ...

...AND FIGURE OUT EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE.

VOLUME 3 END

NO MATTER
HOW DOWN YOU
ARE, YOU'LL AT
LEAST EAT

HEY
HOW MUCH LONGER YOU GONNA PLAY PIKMIN FOR?
I'LL RESET IF A SINGLE ONE DIES
I WON'T LET 'EM DIE. NOT A ONE.

WHAT'S UP, ASAKO?

SHE OVERSLEPT THIS MORNIN' AN' HER HAIR'S A HOT MESS

SURE IS

BONUS

YER THINKIN' THESE CURLS AIN'T NO BIG DEAL, AIN'T CHA I?

'COS THEY'RE A REAL PAIN IN THE ASS, Y'KNOW!

CAN'T BE AS WEIRD AS WHAT YER WEARIN' NOW... YOU LOOK LIKE A MONSTER...

POOF

THEY HAVE A LOT OF VOLUME, THAT'S FOR SURE.

SEEEE? IT TAKES A LOT OF WORK TO TAME 'EM EVERY DAY!

WHOA.

IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, THEY USED TO CALL ME "AKAN-KO," LIKE THE FAMOUS LAKE...

OH, THE ONE WITH THE MOSS BALLS.

IT'S CUTE, THOUGH. YOU LOOK LIKE A BICHON FRISE.

I ENVY Y'ALL.

YOU AND YOSHIKI...

...BOTH HAVE SILKY STRAIGHT HAIR. WISH I HAD HAIR LIKE YOU TWO.

HIKARU'S HAIR'S A LITTLE CURLY, RIGHT?

AND MAKI... WELL, HIS HEAD'S SHAVED, SO WHO KNOWS.

IT AIN'T BOTHERSOME WHEN YER HAIR'S AS SHORT AS HIKARU'S.

HOW DO YOU TWO GET YER HAIR SO SILKY LIKE THAT?

I LET IT AIR-DRY TOO...

NOTHIN' SPECIAL, REALLY..

EARLY TO BED, EARLY TO RISE?

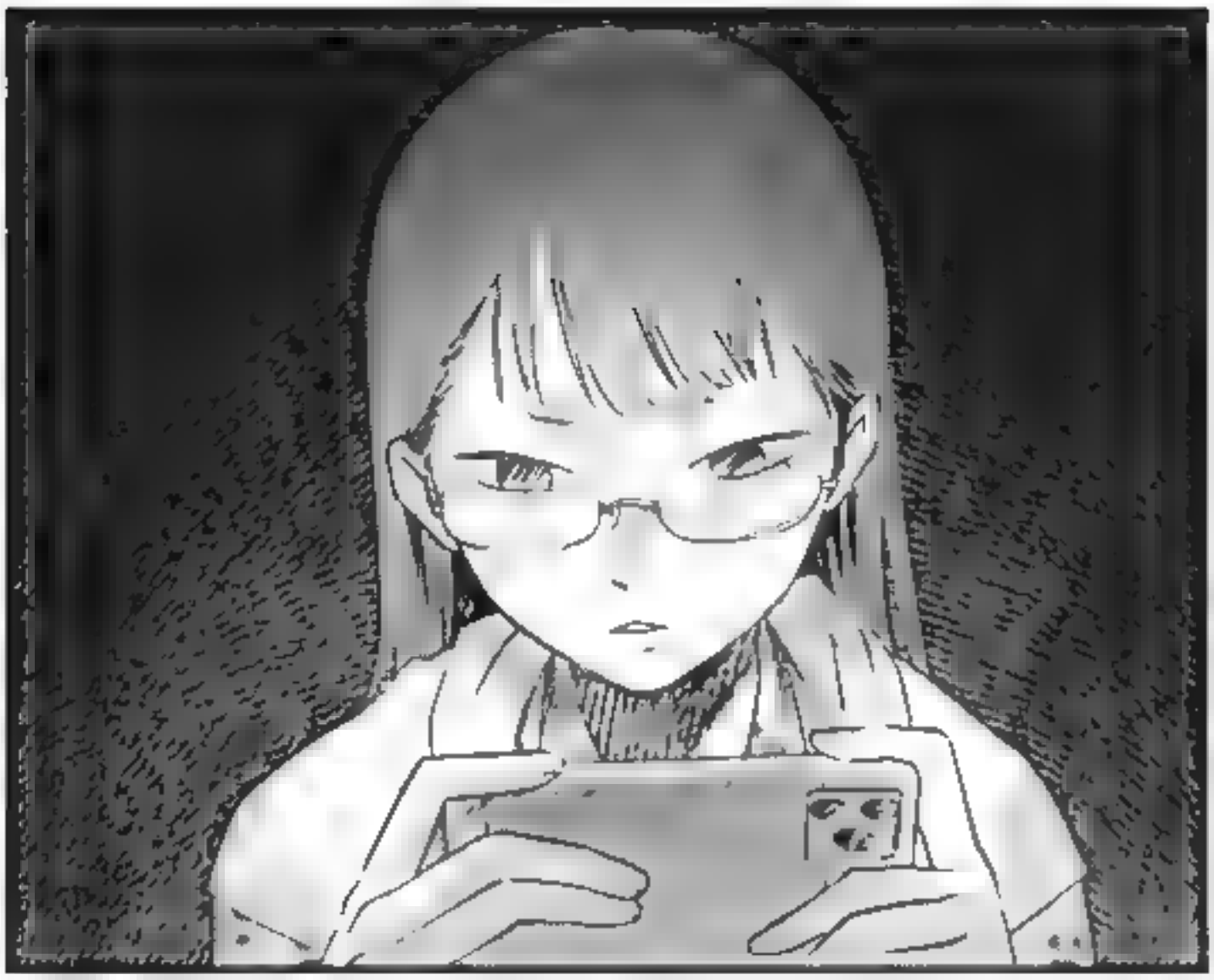
.....

...IS CRUEL, AIN'T IT?

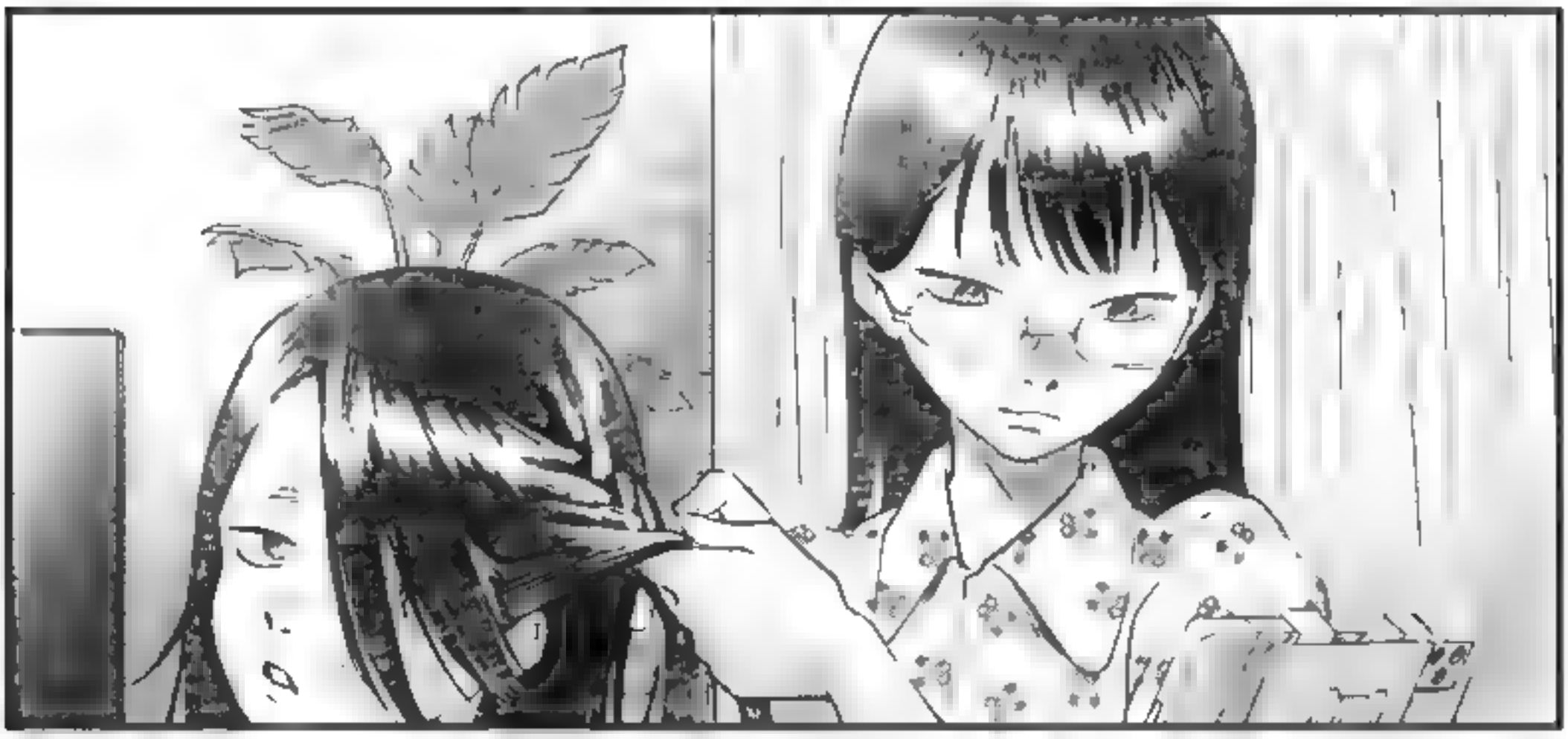
LIFE...

FOR REAL?

I'LL ASK MY MOM. SHE'S A HAIRSTYLIST.



I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO BRAID!



HUH?

AH-CHAN.

LEMME BORROW YA FOR A SEC.

THIS IS GREAT!

WOOOOW!!

WOOOW!

WOW!

I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT KEEP THAT VOLUME UNDER CONTROL A BIT...

HEH.

I AIN'T CLUMSY. I JUST DON'T TRY.

YER USUALLY SO CLUMSY WITH EVERYTHING— 'CEPT WHEN IT COMES TO COOKIN', THAT IS ...

HOW'D YOU DO THIS?

I'M FALLING FOR YOU ALL OVER AGAIN!

...IS A CINCH!

WHEN I PUT MY HEART INTO IT, SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

ASAKO AND YUUKI?

YEAH, THEY'RE CLOSE, HUH?

THEY'VE BEEN IN THE SAME SCHOOL SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL...

...BUT THEY'RE CHILDHOOD FRIENDS, RIGHT? SEEIN' HOW THEIR PARENTS ARE FRIENDS, AND THEY'VE BEEN AROUND EACH OTHER SINCE THEY WERE YOUNG.

THEY SURE ARE.

WHAT'CHA SMILIN' ABOUT? IT'S CREEPY.

NAW ...

...IT'S JUST SORTA... HEART-WARMIN', AIN'T IT?

.....

YO-SHIKI.

THAT'S NICE...

HUH ...?

WHAT ARE YA GONNA DO?

I WANNA PRACTICE BRAIDIN' ON YA.

C'MERE A SEC.

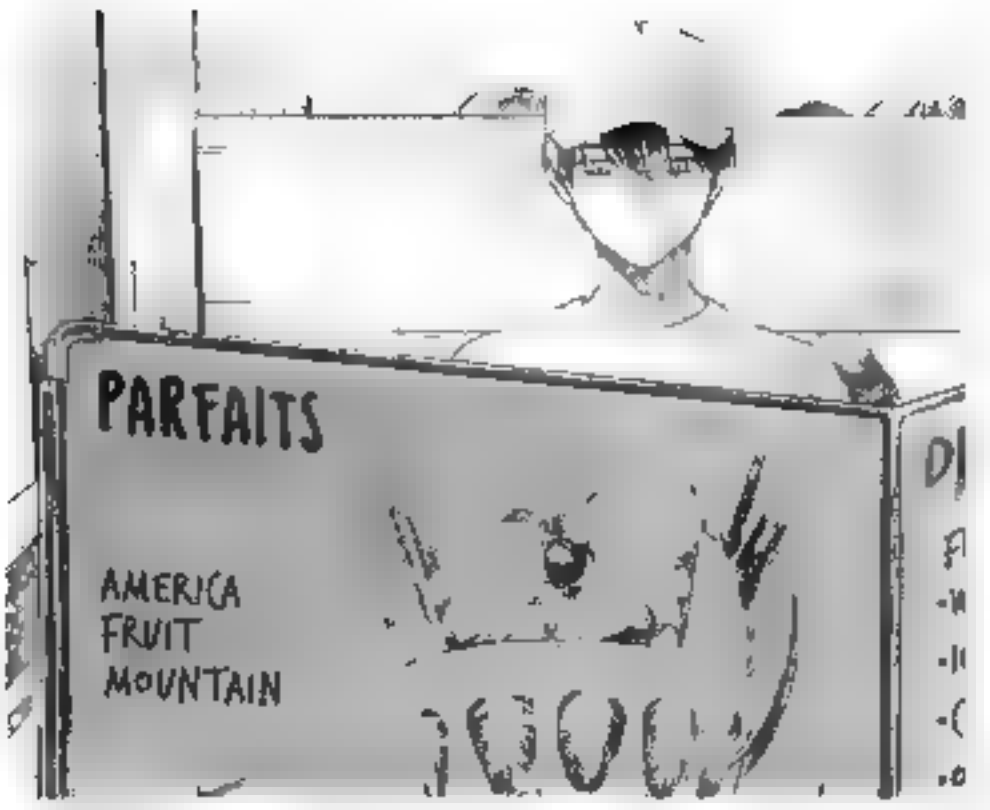
UH...

WHAT ...?

BONES END

HE SINGS SUPER-
SOFTLY WHENEVER
HIS CLASS SINGS
THE SCHOOL SONG
TOGETHER

Q&A



Q I'd like to know if Yoshiki and Hikaru have a "type."

—— Yoshiki likes "someone with admirable qualities," and before he died, Hikaru preferred "someone who's healthy and has a big chest." The concept doesn't register for "Hikaru," so he doesn't really know what it means to have a "type."

Q What do Hikaru and Yoshiki most often order from the menu at America?

—— A lot of spaghettilike dishes. After they've eaten at America, both of them usually eat dinner at home too.

Q Since becoming "Hikaru," has he experienced any physical growth, like the length of his hair and nails or his height? If his body were to completely stop growing, I'm sure people would start to notice eventually, but I'm curious if the new "Hikaru" is able to mimic such unknown territory as the form Hikaru would have grown into.

—Since becoming "Hikaru," his hair, nails, and height have continued to develop as usual, so he's physically growing. However, I think the way "Hikaru" is growing is slightly different from how Hikaru would've grown if he were still alive.

Q Why is Yoshiki older than everyone else?

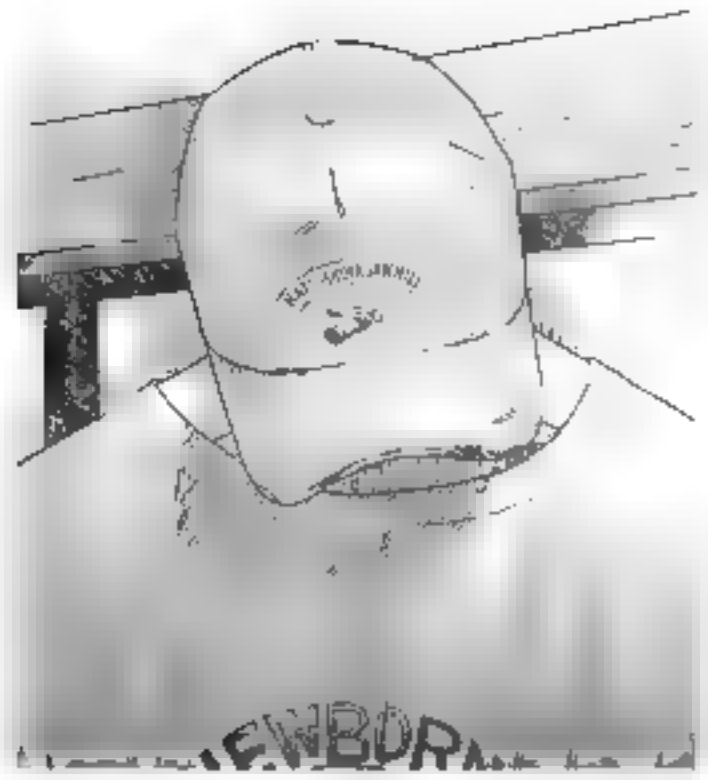
—Yoshiki's birthday is April 20, and Hikaru's birthday is March 20 of the following year. In Japan, where the school year starts at the beginning of April, that puts them in the same grade. They're nearly a year apart, so Yoshiki matured faster when they were younger, but I wouldn't say that's exactly the case now.

Q I get the sense that Yoshiki-kun isn't the type to actively seek out friends on his own. Can you tell us how he became friends with Asako-chan and the others?

——Yoshiki, Hikaru, Asako, and Yuuki all went to the same middle school, and since the school was small, they naturally became friends, regardless of gender. Maki joined them in high school, but it wasn't until Hikaru started palling around with him that he became a part of their group.

Q And what are Maki's, Asako's, and Yuuki's full names?

——Yuuta Maki, Asako Yamagishi, and Yuuki Tadokoro.



Q Why does Hikaru call his parents "Mama" and "Daddy," but Yoshiki calls his parents "Mom" and "Dad"?

——They were both born in the same village, but Yoshiki's mom is from Tokyo and doesn't have a regional accent, so it just naturally happened.

Q Hikaru wears a watch on his right arm, so is he left-handed?

— Hikaru is right-handed, but he wears a wristwatch for left-handed people. The watch was a gift from his dad, but his dad was a bit out of touch with highbrow stuff like that and mistakenly bought Hikaru a left-handed watch.

Q What are Hikaru/"Hikaru"'s and Yoshiki's shoe sizes?

— At the moment, Hikaru/"Hikaru" wears a 26 cm (US 8), and Yoshiki wears 27.5 cm (US 9.5).

Q Why does "Hikaru" "feel good" when someone has their hand inside him...? I'm also curious to know whether it "feels good" in a sense of it being pleasurable or relaxing.

— I personally believe that humans feel the most pleasure when their primal desires are fulfilled, and for a nonhuman like "Hikaru," the act of taking something inside his body is his equivalent to that primal instinct. His instincts are likely the biggest difference between "Hikaru" and humans, which suggests he experiences some sensations that would be incomprehensible to humans.

Afterword

THANK YOU FOR READING VOLUME 3.
THE NEXT VOLUME MARKS THE
BEGINNING OF A NEW ARC, SO I
SINCERELY HOPE YOU'LL CONTINUE
SUPPORTING THIS SERIES!

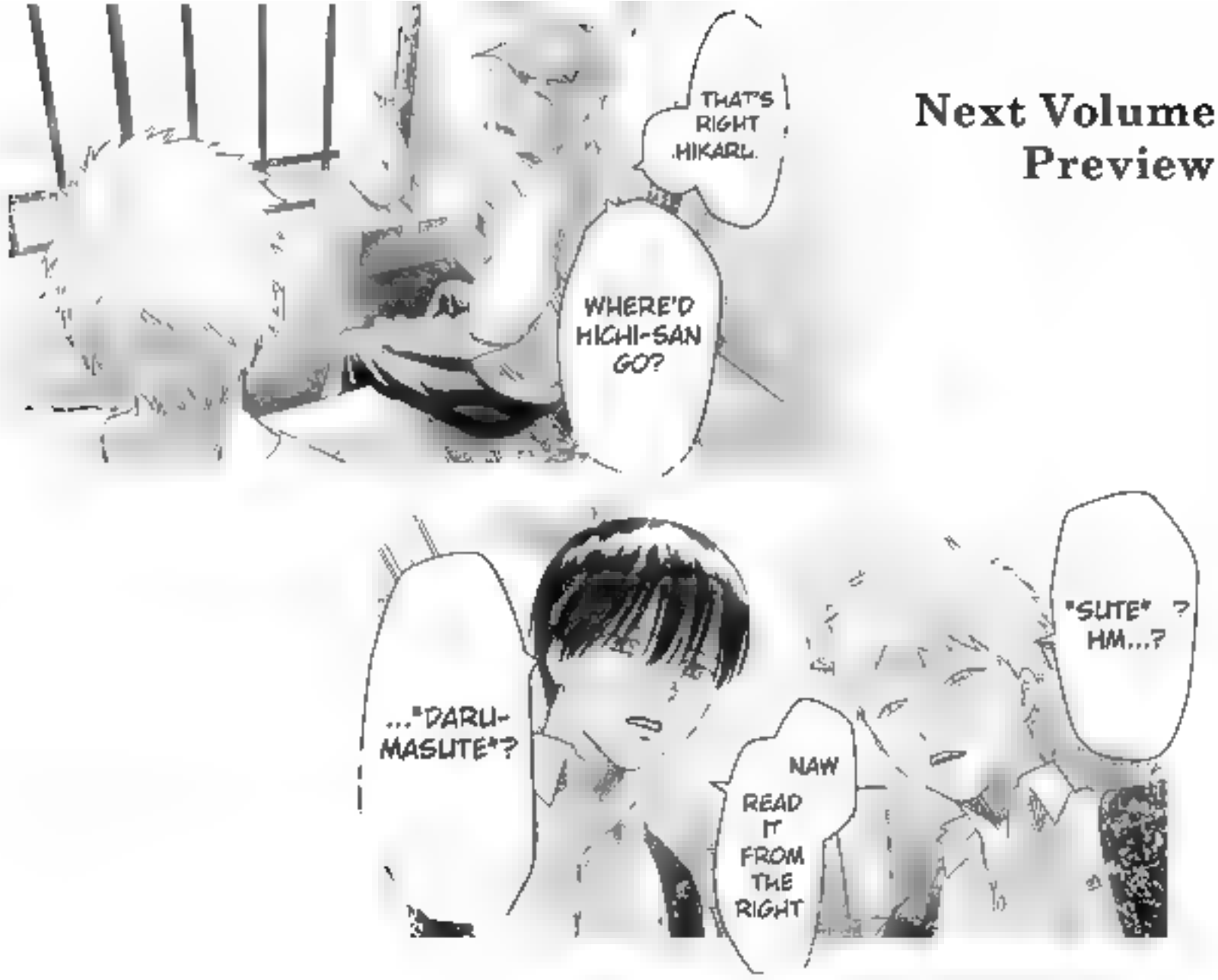
MOKUMOKUREN

ASSISTANTS

SARINA HIRAKAWA
NOMU

THANK YOU
VERY MUCH!

Next Volume Preview



What exactly *is* *Hikaru?*

The time to face the truth draws near.

THE SUMMER

HIKARU

DIED

continues in Volume 4...

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

TRANSLATION NOTES

COMMON HONORIFICS

***-san*:** The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.
***-sama*:** Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.
***-kun*:** Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.
***-chan*:** An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals regardless of gender.
no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness; if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.
***-niisan, nii-san, aniki,* etc.:** A term of endearment meaning "big brother" that may be more widely used to address any young man who is like a brother, regardless of whether he is related or not.

GENERAL

Hikaru: The Chinese character for Hikaru's name means "light."

PAGE 73

Nasbitetsu: This game title is a parody of a popular board game–like video game that sends players all around Japan trying to amass the most wealth.

THE SUMMER HIKARU DIED

MOKUMOKUREN

3

TRANSLATION: AJANI OLOYE

LETTERING: ABIGAIL BLACKMAN

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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